

WIFE'S STRATEGY

RALD ALLEN

Right, 100, by P. G. Eastman.

"Ha, are you there?" called Mr. Milton from the back door.
"What is it, pa?" asked his wife, who appeared with a dish in her hand.
"It's Jim Thomas coming down road."

"Well, what if it is?"
He looks all dressed up."
He's probably going to a dance somewhere."

"He's probably coming right here to see our Minnie."

"Then he'll have greased his boots or nothing. Minnie ain't wasting her time on no such fellows as Jim Thomas."

The farmer had more to say, but before he could say it Jim Thomas had arrived. He was a young man of twenty-five who had no particular occupation, but traded horses, helped to put up windmills and now and then acted as a piano agent.

He sat down beside the farmer, reached for his jackknife and a stick and proceeded to whittle and talk. Mrs. Milton came to the door to shake the tablecloth and gave him a nod, but during the two hours he remained he saw nothing of Minnie. He seemed much disappointed.

When he had departed the farmer entered the sitting room and said to the wife:

"Look here, Martha, what's the use in hurting a fellow's feelings?"

"What fellow?"

"Jim Thomas, of course. You didn't say three words to him, and Minnie didn't appear at all. It was a regular snub, and I felt sorry for him."

"Then your sympathies are wasted. I want to tell you that Jim Thomas is a sneak, and if Minnie ever speaks to him again I'll box her ears, though she is going on nineteen years old."

The farmer sat down and pulled off his boots.

"Martha," he began, "I've known for two weeks that there was something up and that Minnie and you were keeping it from me. Now, then, I want to know all about it. Jim Thomas was down in the lot where I was at work today, and he had just begun to tell me that Minnie and Burt Anderson were mad at each other when Elder Davis came along and hung around so long that Jim had to go before finishing his story. You might as well tell me the whole story."

"I told you Jim was a sneak," answered the wife. "If he hadn't been there wouldn't have been any fuss between Minnie and Burt, and if he hadn't been he wouldn't have shown his face here tonight."

"This seems to be a 'tarnal nice howdy--two folks engaged to be married and fighting like cats and dogs. What's the new about?"

"Nothing but Burt's jealousy. Minnie wrote her name in an autograph album, and Burt found it out through Jim Thomas and gave her a blowing up about it. She sassed back, and he got mad, and that's the reason he hasn't been here for the last two weeks."

"What in thunder is an aw-to-graff album?" asked the husband after thinking for a minute or two.

"It's a book that folks write their names in, and you needn't swear about it. It belonged to a summer boarder down at Scott's."

"And all she did was to write her name in it?"

"That's all, though Jim made Burt believe the fellow was struck on Minnie and said she had eyes like a s---."

"What sort of a critter is a s---?"

"I don't know, and I don't care, and I want to tell you that you are not to mix into this business."

"But ain't I her father, and ain't it my business to go to Burt Anderson and tell him that Minnie is a hundred times too good for him?"

"No sir, it ain't! Abijah Milton, you are a thick headed mat, and you are so nearsighted that you run against fences. If you had your way you'd spoil your only daughter's happiness forever. You are not going to have your way. You are going to fold your arms and keep still and let me work this thing out myself."

"By thunder, Martha, but--"

"Swearing some more! No wonder you have become afraid of lightning: swearing won't help you, however. You have got to do as I say. If Jim Thomas comes around again you can talk about windmills all you want to, but don't talk about Minnie. If you see Burt Anderson use him just as he revenged himself later upon the leaders by scathing editorials."

"And what'll you do?" asked the husband and father.

"You wait and see. If you don't see Burt Anderson around here in less than two weeks then my name wasn't Martha the Tompkins before I married you, and I didn't take a prize spelling the whole school down."

"I don't see a how?" But she interrupted, saying it was time to wind the wife to bed, and during the

time she resolutely refused to say word whenever he attempted to investigate him: Then one evening through Burt Anderson working valiantly, the horse in the field alongside the house was the answer.

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"He might get up a sort of hen cancer."

"Suppose," continued the wife, "that the lines were to get under his heels and some one was to hit him five or six cuts with the whip, would he break into a cancer?"

"I guess he would. Yes, he'd be so astounded that he would probably dash along for a few rods."

"And would he keep to the road?"

"I guess he would. What are you asking all these questions for?"

"Perhaps I'll tell you this evening. Don't bother me now, as I've got three pairs of pants to wash."

Burton Milton had no sooner left the house for the fields next morning than his wife began digging up a crack of butter for the village grocer. While Minnie harnessed the old horse to the democrat wagon and got ready to drive to town.

"Now, then, remember what I've told you. When you come along to the cornfield keep your eyes straight in front of you and don't look around even if Burt calls to you. Just make out that you don't hear. On your way back when you get to the schoolhouse--"

"Understand," nodded the daughter.

"Don't forget the screaming part."

"No, but do you suppose?"

"There is no supposing about it. I am your mother, and I am no spring chicken. Now go on with you."

Burt Anderson was working in the cornfield that morning within two rods of the highway when he caught the pounding of hoofs and the rattle of wheels and looked up to see Minnie Milton driving by. He dropped his hoe and opened his mouth to call, but she struck the horse with the whip as if to hurry on. He couldn't say that she saw him, but he thought she did, and the thought hardened his heart. He had forgiven her "easy" days and days ago and was ready to "make up," but this action on her part showed that she was punishing him. From then until 3 o'clock in the afternoon the young man managed to hove about twelve hills of corn. The rest of the time was spent in sulking or sitting on the fence and looking down the village road. His waiting and sulking was rewarded at last. A mile away arose a cloud of dust kicked up by old Charlie's feet, and as it drew nearer and nearer the young man prepared to drop off the fence and hide. Minnie should not have the pleasure of shouting him again. He was on the ground when he heard a woman's screams for help. He heard the hoof beats of a horse on the gallop. He heard the clatter of a rickety old horse wagon.

It was a runaway. Burt Anderson saw that it was the instant he got his head above the fence. The lines had fallen under the horse's feet, and she was standing up and swaying from side to side and screaming. There was a hero and a scared. There were explanations. There was no apology to old Charlie, though he certainly deserved one.

"No, I'm no spring chicken!" observed farmer Milton's wife to herself as she stood at her gate and saw that Burt Anderson was driving Minnie home and that Minnie's red cheeks had come back to her.

"Say, now, but how did you manage it?" whispered the husband to the wife that evening as the two lovers had the plazza to themselves.

"Manage what?" was the reply in a puzzled voice. "Abijah Milton, you are the most thick headed man I ever saw. How did I manage it? Just as if I'd been managing something--conspiring and plotting and all that sort of thing! There are certain times when you make a body tired."

"A surprise for Horace Greeley."

In the early days of the suffragist movement Miss Susan B. Anthony had no more bitter opponent than Horace Greeley, says a writer in the Boston Transcript. It was for a long time his custom to wind up all debates with the conclusive remark, "The best women I know do not want to vote."

When the New York constitution was being altered in 1867 Miss Anthony laid a train for him. She wrote to Mrs. Greeley and persuaded the editor's wife not only to sign a petition for woman's suffrage herself, but to circulate the paper and get 300 signatures among her acquaintances. In the committee Mrs. Greeley, who was chairman, had listened to the debate and prepared to introduce to the convention an adverse report. He was just about to utter his usual "settled" when George William Curtis rose.

"Mr. Chairman," said he, "I hold in my hand a petition for suffrage signed by 300 women of Westchester, headed by Mrs. Horace Greeley."

The chairman's embarrassment could hardly be controlled. He had found at least one of "the best women I know" wanted to vote, but he revenged himself later upon the leaders by scathing editorials.

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NOTICE OF SETTLEMENT.
Notice is hereby given that the accounts of
the subscriber, the survivor of the last will and
testament of Lyman B. Kent, deceased, will be
audited and settled by the Surrogate and re-
solved to be settled on Tuesday, the third
day of July next.

Dated June 11, 1906.

EDWIN A. BYRDNER, Proctor.

May 25, 1906.

ESTATE OF SETH OOZ COMSTOCK.

Pursuant to the order of GEORGE E. RUSSELL,
Surrogate of the County of Essex, this day
made, on the application of the undersigned
and the other legatees named in the will,
I give to the creditors of said deceased to ex-
hibit to the subscriber under oath or affirmation
the date of death of the said deceased, and the
date of said deceased within nine months
from the date of this will, or will be forever barred